

first as an Operations Officer to a Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2003, and then as a Battalion Commander in Fallujah, Iraq in 2004. His battalion was involved in the Battle of Fallujah, which saw some of the most intense house-to-house fighting of the war. Many proud Marines under his command gave their lives in that battle.

Over the past 24 months, his unselfish devotion to duty, exceptional performance, and outstanding professionalism have translated into invaluable service to the Senate. He has advised Members and Senate staff members on matters of great importance to the United States Marine Corps. In the fluid nature of the legislative cycle, he distinguished himself by establishing and developing great working relationships with Senators and their staffs. He responded to thousands of congressional inquiries, ranging from such sensitive issues as notification of combat casualties, to providing timely information on the operations and budget of the Marine Corps.

He also planned and executed approximately 15 international congressional delegations. I had the pleasure of traveling on several of these congressional delegations with Colonel Olson. His acumen for social interaction carried over into Colonel Olson's ability to represent his service at numerous Marine Corps and Joint Service social events on Capitol Hill. Among others, these events included the Marine Corps Birthday Commemoration, the Joint Services Reception, and several Marine Corps fall and spring receptions—all important events that enabled me and my Senate colleagues to maintain close relationships with the Marine Corps' senior leadership.

On behalf of the Senate, I thank Colonel Olson for his continued service to the Nation and the United States Marine Corps, and I thank his wife, Dawn, for her steadfast support while he fulfilled this essential duty. As Gregg departs the Senate to assume command of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit at Camp Pendleton, CA, we in the U.S. Senate wish him all the best.

HONORING TROOPER DAVID SHAWN BLANTON, JR.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of North Carolina State Trooper David Shawn Blanton, Jr., who was tragically killed on June 18 during a routine traffic stop near Canton, NC. David is the 59th North Carolina State Trooper to have been killed in the line of duty.

David was only 24 years old and was a 2-year veteran of the North Carolina Highway Patrol. He was a native of Sylva, NC, and a 2002 graduate of Smoky Mountain High School where he was a football and wrestling star.

We are all grateful for David's dedication to protecting the citizens of North Carolina. He lived in Cherokee with his wife Michaela, who had just

given birth to their son Tye 2 weeks ago.

David was a member of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indian Tribe and the first member of that tribe to serve with the Highway Patrol. In addition to being a State trooper, David volunteered as the Junior Varsity softball coach at Smoky Mountain High School.

Along with his wife Michaela and son Tye, David is survived by his father, David S. Blanton, Sr., mother, Jennifer Blanton, and younger brother, Jesse Blanton.

David's friends, family, fellow troopers, and the people of North Carolina are mourning this very tragic loss.

I know there are no words I can offer to help comfort Michaela and other members of the Blanton family, but I hope my colleagues in the Senate will join me in keeping them in our thoughts and prayers.

David gave his life in service to our State, and this ultimate sacrifice should never be forgotten.

I send my deepest condolences to all who had the privilege of knowing this young man who gave his life in service to our State.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, earlier this week, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, now numbering over 1,000, are heartbreaking and touching. To respect their efforts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through energy_prices@crapo.senate.gov to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD today's letters.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SENATOR CRAPO: We are not going to be able to take any time to enjoy our great state of Idaho this summer as with years past. The gas to go and return from our favorite spots like Stanley basin, Warm Lake, McCall's Ponderosa State Park is just too much to make it enjoyable. The cost of food clearly is reflective of the fuel pricing. This just makes it far too expensive to go anywhere this summer. I am absolutely disgusted in the way our government is allowing this to happen to the American people.

I look forward to a movement to begin re-commissioning our own drilling rigs that still sit idle in the Gulf of Mexico.

I look forward to a movement to begin drilling on our own land for oil that we all know is right under our own borders.

I look forward to a movement to release and discontinue the excessive storage of emergency fuels.

I also know that I am not alone in monitoring the existing administration who will not lobby for these items I list to be addressed and resolved. It is time we start taking care of our own with our own resources. This includes limiting the impacts on the greater population by the loud concerns of a few groups. With today's technology we can certainly drill and protect our environment and begin to reduce greatly our dependence on foreign oil(s).

Respectfully,

BILL, Boise.

DEAR SENATOR CRAPO: As one of those who voted for you I am pleased to provide a bit of input on the costs of fuel and the impact on myself, my family, and my business.

Just like the majority of Idaho families, our family has been directly impacted by the very high prices of gasoline and the way it happened . . . so quickly and without reprieve or real alternatives.

In my business, I must have a good supply of gasoline in order to function. I operate a flight training school for pilots in Nampa. My costs for fuel are always around \$10,000 per year and that is normally my one major expense associated with my business outside of the other normal overhead costs any other business has. Even so, it is the Numero Uno cost for my business, and now it is about 50% increased from that already very high price. What compounds this loss is that so many people have become too financially short that my customer base is very low now.

Normally, in the past 7 years, I would be looking at a full student schedule, with at least 3 or 4 on a waiting list. This year, I have a 20% load and no waiting list. It is that sparse due to the economy, then compounded by the very high fuel costs.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide some direct input on the subject to your office.

Sincerely yours,

GARY, Nampa.

DEAR SENATOR: The biggest impact that gas prices has had on me affects our family. We have six married children and one single daughter spread throughout the west. One in Colorado Springs, CO; another in Mesa, AZ; two in the Orem, UT, area; another in dental school at Marquette; and two in the Boise area. We plan a family reunion every summer, which is usually our once-a-year gathering. We have cancelled our reunion this year, scheduled for Colorado Springs, CO, because of the cost of fuel for everyone. I just can't tell you how disappointing it is to all of us not to have an opportunity to be together this year. We hope that it will not stop us next year.

I hear all of the reports that America has ample supplies but legislation and environmentalists prevent us from developing the natural resources. We are too late for today, but tomorrow will be here and we need to be prepared to provide for ourselves. All that you can do to make this possible is needed and necessary. Please do your best to make it happen.

DOUG.

PLEASE pass emergency legislation to exploit America's natural resources. Authorize drilling wherever oil companies think there might be oil or natural gas, authorize nuclear energy and wind power. Set up drilling stations off America's shores instead of letting Cuba and China take our oil. Show some resolve and Yankee ingenuity!

Americans will downsize and conserve—the market will take care of that, but you should have had us energy independent years ago. We could be sending money to America instead of supporting people who do not have our country's best interest at heart.

Americans used to take care of problems before this developed into such a serious situation. We used to take care of people who wanted to cause us harm instead of insisting on being "politically correct". Strong countries do not get attacked. Weak countries like what we are becoming do! Congress and the rest of us have all seen this problem coming for many years. Do nothing now and we are on our way to becoming a second-class country.

Please show the leadership that you were elected to use. Make us energy independent. It does not matter if it takes ten years. Ten years ago, if Congress had "taken care of business," we would not be in this dire situation now. Every drop of oil that is produced in this country is one drop that does not have to be imported from another country.

STAN, Boise.

Dear Senator CRAPO: Thank you first for this opportunity to voice my concerns, which I'm sure are no different than millions of others. The energy price effect on me is no different than on, I'm sure again, millions of others. It means no vacation, less "extra-curricular" activities and simply prioritizing vehicle use. Unfortunately, the energy prices have a ripple affect on a lot of things, but I suspect what has the largest impact is the price of food, which is also increasing substantially as it costs so much more to transport it.

I think Congress' number one priority right now should be reducing the cost of oil/gasoline; however, it is done. I believe that, by doing so, you will resolve and/or improve the majority of other inflation concerns, i.e., the cost of food, clothing. By reducing energy costs, it would likely free up businesses to expand and provide additional jobs, thus reducing unemployment. I see gasoline prices as the "bane" of our life right now and anything you can do to resolve this problem is much appreciated.

KET, Emmett.

You and Congress know what needs to be done. Drill now—drill HERE! Join China and Cuba off our own shores and become self reliant again. Start drilling in Anwar. Start drilling in Montana. Start using the resources in Colorado in shale. And build more refineries—and you—CONGRESS—loosen the hurdles that make it impossible for anyone drilling and/or building those refineries we need so much—as well as provide alternatives (such as nuclear and solar). Stop wasting time telling "stories"—and loosen the restrictions that environmentalists have shackled us with! Do your job.

Just let us become a self reliant nation again!

UNSIGNED.

The rising gas prices have really affected my life. I am a widow who is on a very limited budget—every nickel counts. I am still working and live about 15 miles from my work. There is no public transportation out where I live in Kuna, ID, so I have to bite the bullet and pay these exorbitant prices at the pump, do without going to the movies, out to dinner or buying the new pair of sandals I need for the summer. My elderly mom lives with me and requires lots of travel into town for doctor appointments, which take gas. I usually take her each summer to Wyoming to her home town for a visit. No way can I do it this year what with the gas prices, rising motel costs, food costs, etc. I was in hopes I could look at retiring in a couple of years, but that is definitely on hold now. I can't afford not to work with gas costing me over \$50 each week to fill up my car. Sure hope Congress gets going and allows us to start drilling for our own oil!

LOUISE, Kuna.

What I would like to see is a two-pronged approach. One is drilling offshore in Alaska, and oil shale in Utah/Colorado/Wyoming, Montana and North Dakota, along with nuclear, solar and wind.

The other is conserving in ways such as: by 2010 all appliances sold are Energy Star-rated; all houses and mobile homes to be built to the Energy Star rating. Instead of the government giving big grants for research, why not do like the X-prize for space travel and put up money for benchmark improvements in things such as 100-mpg cars, solar improvements, wind generator improvements, home energy use improvements, etc. I used to own a hatchback in the late 1980s that I would get 42-44 miles to the gallon on the highway. Why cars of that size can't get 60+mpg now is beyond me.

Without the Republicans acting more like Teddy Roosevelt and less like George Bush, the Democrats will never go along with the offshore or Alaskan drilling. The other thing that you and other Republicans need to do is to go before the American people and say "The Democrats in Congress are against the middle class jobs and real living middle class wages and benefits that would be provided with the opening of these locations. Norway can drill safely off their shores, and I know the American people can do an even better job of protecting the environment then they can."

Thanks for your time,

UNSIGNED.

For us personally the high costs of fuel and heating oil have caused some huge changes in our lives. We are senior citizens on a fixed income and the rising costs of fuel and food are way greater than our income and projected cost of living raises that we get from Social Security. Recently we had a death in our family—in another state. The cost of driving or flying there made it very hard for us in our decision not to go. Also we are staying home a lot more. We cannot afford pleasure trips so we have to make every trip to town count. We see people who have to drive out of town to work—and the fuel costs can outweigh the benefits of working. I see American aid poured out to other countries who are in crises and yet the crises right here at home are being overlooked.

Please take care of Americans first! Stop this oil from going any higher!

Sincerely,

RAY AND VI MUELLER, Priest River.

We are an average family of five—Dad, Mom, 16-year-old boy, 9-year-old girl, and 4-year-old girl. My husband is in new home construction, and I am an accounts payable clerk for a university. We both work full-time jobs, and both of us work part-time night and weekend jobs to help make ends-meet. My daughter was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis a year ago, so we have some very big medical expenses. We have had to travel to Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah, from our home in Rexburg, Idaho, every six weeks for the last year. Because of the rise in gas prices and the rising medical costs, I have to work a second job to pay for these expenses. Our vehicle is a 2005 Yukon that gets about 16 miles to the gallon, so this trip is not economical, but I don't have any choice but to make this trip every six weeks. Because of the rise in gas, I can't even trade my SUV in on another car because the car dealers won't trade with me. My employer provides medical insurance with my monthly premium costing \$250 for my family. My daughter's medication is almost \$200 per month and I pay hospital/doctors/lab bills almost \$300 per month. With each increase in our monthly expenses, it becomes more difficult to pay

our bills. We need help! I am hoping and praying for something good to happen that will help reduce our monthly expenses.

Thank you,

TAUNYA, Rexburg.

DEAR SENATOR CRAPO: As you know the driving distance in our state is unlike most states. My husband and I both travel over 23 miles one way to work every day. Due to the continual increase in cost of the gas we have been carpooling together for over a year now. The biggest problem we have is with every increase in gas so does the increase of everything else you buy, but the wages have not gone up with it.

Every time we fill our tank, it takes away from groceries and other necessities; with every increase, we are to the point there is not much more to give up. The cupboards are bare, and we try to get by on what is the cheapest and bare minimum, if it continues to go up as it has, we will get to the point where we have to choose between the mortgages and utilities or gas in the tank. If it were not so far away, we would consider riding horses to work every day.

I think as long as the environment and nature is preserved and monitored, domestic production is OK along with alternative sources. We need to quit being so reliant on foreign oil and start helping ourselves not only for now but for the future.

ESTHER, Athol.

SIR: I am fairly new to Idaho only been here for five years now. I was from Texas. I had some very good friends who [had to cap their family well, which put out 10 to 15 barrels a day]. A lot of people were hurt, not only in Texas, but in other states as well. We should move forward much faster on the part gas/part electric cars for now even the big one to. We should use our own oil and move to anything that we can make for ourselves. I don't like it, but we have to stop being everyone's go-to-guy and start taking care of us for a change.

PHILIP.

I do not wish to share my story but I would like to recommend that we quit sending the Alaskan oil to Japan and use it within the United States.

I also would like to see Congress open up the known oil fields in the United States today (not someday). Many have been shut down and capped for years. Plus we need to explore for new sites as well as start drilling where we already know there is oil. We need to start building refineries and updating the current ones that we have. Why we ever got ourselves in this mess is beyond me.

I would also like to recommend that you talk with John McCain and help him get his head on straight. I am not sure why our party has chosen a Socialist for its candidate. If I didn't feel like I was throwing my vote away and maybe even help elect Obama, I would vote for Barr.

If the Congress continues to do nothing about the energy problem, I think this nation will come down on Congress with a vengeance.

SUZETTE.

The cost of fuel has certainly changed the way I am now living my life. After my retirement, I was planning on visits to my sister (Arizona), my grandkids (Portland) and my cousins in Missouri and New Mexico.

Now I am tending my garden, growing as much of my food as possible to supplement and help offset the high price in the grocery store. I am not using my clothes dryer; I am lucky enough to live in a subdivision that still allows clothes lines. This might seem minor, but I am cringing at the cost of heating my home this winter and am applying extra money to the gas company.

I do not go out to lunch with my friends; we talk on the phone but do not have lunches out. We are planning on one lunch a month at someone's home.

Extra shopping? Not on your life!! Since we have no clue how much fuel is going to go, extra spending is not considered. Is this hurting the economy, no doubt about it, but with no reasonable end in sight we have no choice!!

IRENE.

I would have much preferred to see the global warming legislation go through. The energy prices right now are short-term pain, but nothing compared to what we're headed for if the current course is maintained on global warming. Please think in the longer term and consider changing your stance on global warming. And please don't send me one of those garbage "thank you for your support" automatic responses. I do not support your vote on this.

ILANA, Boise.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING DIANE REESE

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the presentation of the Diane Reese Award to Marilyn J. Smith for her work as the president and co-founder of the Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services in Seattle, WA. The presentation took place in the Library of Congress during a major conference on domestic violence.

This award is much more than recognition of an individual who has gone above and beyond to help those who have and still are suffering from the terrible domestic violence abuses happening daily. This award recognizes a way of life that has inspired and helped countless people that are in need. I would like to commend Marilyn J. Smith for her outstanding work continuing Ms. Reese's compassionate legacy.

As some of you know, I got my start serving the public when I came to southern West Virginia as a VISTA volunteer. Although Ms. Reese's social justice work started long before her life moving journey to the coalfields of West Virginia, it was that journey that connected both of our lives together.

I was able to witness firsthand Diane's ability to gracefully build the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Working with Sue Julian, who still is a team coordinator at the Coalition, they provided the leadership to create a strong program that has grown into a network of shelters, outreach centers, and support groups throughout West Virginia. Diane inspired many thanks to her steady, quiet but fully committed life. Sue and the rest of the coalition continue that work.

Visiting the various shelters Diane helped set up in the early 1990s was a very moving opportunity that I feel very fortunate to have experienced. Working closely with Ms. Reese and the coalition, we fought together for the passage of the first Federal Violence

Against Women Act and its subsequent reauthorizations. I have continued to work with the coalition and have tried to help with vital Federal grants. Diane, Sue, and the coalition have played a pivotal role in advising me about the Violence Against Women Act over the years.

In West Virginia, Diane Reese touched the lives of so many with her unique ability to heal and serve those in need. Throughout her years of serving the public, Diane became an adjunct faculty at Southern WV Community College and was an active member in the Mountaineer Food Bank, the Appalachian Research and Defense Fund Board, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, just to name a few. As you can see, Diane certainly went above and beyond the norm with her generosity and charity.

Just last year the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence that Diane helped to create provided support to over 15,000 people, including children. As you can tell, the numbers of those touched by her life are enormous. Her community organizing efforts, spirit for social justice, and expert skills as an educator made her a good counselor and dear friend.

I and all the people who knew and worked with her were saddened to lose her, and we mourn her still. But Diane has an extraordinary legacy that lives on in the work of the coalition in West Virginia and the national award that continues to inspire and acknowledge the next generation of advocates. Diane Reese pursued every obstacle she faced with knowledge, kindness, respect, expertise, and conquered each one of them with grace and optimism. Those of us lucky enough to know her personally will also remember her, and the award in her memory continues to inspire all of us. And, I know that with the great challenges that still face the victims and survivors of domestic violence, Diane would be urging us to continue the work she began and reminding us that the goal of securing peace at home for everyone is a goal upon which we must never give up.●

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL CRAIG M. GREENE

• Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and pay tribute to LTC Craig M. Greene, deputy chief, Army Senate Liaison Division, Office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison, who will retire September 1, 2008. I wish to commend and congratulate Lieutenant Colonel Craig Greene upon his retirement.

Lieutenant Colonel Greene's distinguished career as an infantry officer embodies all of the Army's values of loyalty, duty, respect, honor, integrity, and personal courage and spans 20 years, during which he has distinguished himself as both a soldier and leader.

Upon graduating from the University of Massachusetts, Lieutenant Colonel

Greene served as an infantry officer in command and staff positions in a number of infantry units. Prior to Lieutenant Colonel Greene's assignment to the Office of Chief of Legislative Liaison, he was assigned to the 25th Infantry Division, Light, Schofield Barracks, HI, from 2001 to 2003. His experience in the Army's Officer Personnel Management Command led to Lieutenant Colonel Greene being selected to serve as the brigade S-1 for the 2nd Brigade "Warriors" and the secretary to the General Staff for the Commanding General. The consummate professional, Lieutenant Colonel Greene revised internal systems to streamline information flow and the decisionmaking process to include instituting a "Battle Rhythm" for the division staff eliminating redundant meetings and events.

In his more recent position as a congressional liaison, I have come to know and respect Lieutenant Colonel Greene. A natural at building and maintaining relationships with Members of Congress and their staffs, Lieutenant Colonel Greene was invaluable as the Army faced many challenges associated with its budget and real-world combat operations in the global war on terror. Members knew they could count on Lieutenant Colonel Greene for his counsel, professional advice, and unwavering integrity.

While assigned to the Office of Congressional Legislative Liaison, Lieutenant Colonel Greene prepared members of the Army staff for over 20 hearings and orchestrated over 150 congressional engagements to ensure Congress understood the Army programs and budget requirements to grow and transform the Army. Lieutenant Colonel Greene escorted over 50 congressional delegations worldwide.

His expertise concerning congressional affairs, his strategic, operational, and tactical knowledge of the Army, combined with his keen intuition and ability to develop key relationships have been instrumental in enabling the chief of legislative liaison and the Army to meet the Army's legislative objectives. Lieutenant Colonel Greene has escorted 12 delegations to Iraq and Afghanistan, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. I was privileged to have Lieutenant Colonel Greene as an escort on several of my own trips.

A tireless worker, he coordinated with all of the relevant agencies and individuals to ensure my overseas travel was always successful. I am extremely grateful for the service he provided me and my staff during those trips.

During his distinguished Army career, Lieutenant Colonel Greene has been awarded numerous accolades, including the Defense Meritorious Medal, four Meritorious Service Medals, five Army Accommodation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals, the Expert Infantry Badge, the Ranger Tab, and Parachutist and Air Assault Badge.